

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: EA/TB:JFKNOWLES:AVE/FMK
10/17/73 EXT. 21741
EA/TB-MR. DEXTER
S/S - O: R.ELTZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO CINCPAC

S E C R E T STATE 202369

EXDIS

THE FOLLOWING TEL FROM SECSTATE (OCT 11, 73) TO
BANGKOK PHON PENH RANGOON VIENTIANE IS REPTD:

QTE S E C R E T STATE 302369

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TH,
SUBJECT: DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI'S WASHINGTON
DISCUSSIONS WITH STATE DEPARTMENT

REFS: (A) BANGKOK 14930 (B) STATE 198911

1. CHATCHAI VISITED WASHINGTON OCTOBER 5 TO 8. DURING HIS
STAY HE MET WITH UNDER SECRETARY PORTER, WAS LUNCHEON GUEST
OF ACTING SECRETARY RUSH, CALLED ON CIA DIRECTOR COLBY AND
RECEIVED EXTENDED BRIEFING BY CIA STAFF ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.
EA/TB DIRECTOR ALSO HAD OPPORTUNITIES TO TALK WITH INFOR-
MALLY. PRESENT MESSAGE GIVES HIGHLIGHTS OF STATE DEPART-
MENT DISCUSSIONS. CIA MEETINGS BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY
BY AGENCY. CHATCHAI ALSO MET WITH SENATOR JAVITS AT
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LATTER'S INVITATION, BUT WE DO NOT KNOW SUBSTANCE OF CON-
VERSATION.

2. IN GENERAL, CONVERSATIONS IN STATE WERE PLEASANT AND

CHATCHAI APPEARED BOTH SATISFIED AND APPRECIATIVE. HE DID NOT RAISE ANY OF THE TOPICS ANTICIPATED REF A IN A STRONG OR CLEAR-CUT MANNER, ALTHOUGH MOST OF THEM WERE TOUCHED UPON EITHER AT HIS INITIATIVE OR STATE'S. FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS SUMMARIZE AND COMMENT ON PRINCIPAL ITEMS DISCUSSED.

3. US POLICY: US MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND, INDO-CHINA.

(A) US PRESENCE: CHATCHAI DID NOT BRING THIS QUESTION UP SPECIFICALLY, POSSIBLY BECAUSE HE HAD ALREADY DISPOSED OF IT TO HIS SATISFACTION IN EARLIER MEETING WITH SECRETARY. HOWEVER, EA/TB DIRECTOR WAS ABLE TO ELICIT A FEW USEFUL COMMENTS. HE REAFFIRMED RTG DESIRE TO REDUCE PRESENCE TO PRE-72 LEVEL INCLUDING TDY STRATEGIC AIRCRAFT, BUT DECLINED TO DISCUSS A TIME SCHEDULE. HE EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING (APPARENTLY HIS OWN INFERENCE) THAT US MIGHT WISH TO PRESERVE STATUSQUO UNTIL AFTER SECRETARY'S PEKING VISIT, BUT SAID THAI WOULD EXPECT NEXT WITHDRAWALS TO BEGIN PROMPTLY THEREAFTER. HIS ARRIVAL IN WASHINGTON HAVING COINCIDED WITH OCTOBER 5 PRESS REPORTS ABOUT "SUSPENSION" OF US WITHDRAWAL (REF B), HE DISPLAYED STRONG IRRITATION OVER THE APPARENT LEAK AND WAS EVIDENTALLY NOT PERSUADED THAT SUCH PRESS REPORTS ATTRIBUTED TO ANONYMOUS DOD SOURCES ARE BEYOND DOD CONTROL. HE SAID SUBSTANCE OF THAT PRESS REPORT WAS AN AFFRONT TO THAI SENSITIVITY BECAUSE IT IMPLIED THAT WITHDRAWALS WEREDETERMINED UNILATERALLY BY THE US AND WERE NOT UNDER RTG CONTROL.

(B) INDOCHINA: CHATCHAI DID NOT GO INTO THIS SUBJECT AT LENGTH. HE RESPONDED TO AMBASSADOR PORTER'S QUESTION RE CAMBODIAN OUTLOOK BY EXPRESSING DOUBT THAT INSURGENTS WOULD TRY TO TAKE PHNOM PENH IN NEAR FUTURE. HE REASONED THAT THEY WERE DISORGANIZED BY PRE-AUGUST 15

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BOMBING AND ALSO WOULD WANT TO AVOID BURDEN OF FEEDING PHNOM PENH POPULATION. HE WAS ASSURED THAT US INTENDS TO CONTINUE GIVING MAXIMUM SUPPORT. ON THAI RICE FOR CAMBODIA, CHATCHAI SAID RTG INTENDED TO CONTINUE SUPPLY, BUT WISHED TO DO SO IN SMALL SHIPMENTS TO AVOID ACCUMULATION OF STOCKS THAT MIGHT FALL INTO COMMUNIST HANDS. HE EXPRESSED RTG WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT ANY NEUTRAL AND INDEPENDENT REGIME IN PHNOM PENH, INCLUDING SIHANOUK. AS EVIDENCE OF OPEN-MINDED ATTITUDE, HE REFERRED SEVERAL TIMES TO HAVING HIMSELF GIVEN HOSPITALITY IN BANGKOK LAST AUGUST TO SIHANOUK'S DAUGHTER ON HER WAY TO PEKING.

4. US ASSISTANCE: CHATCHAI DID NOT MAKE A STRONG OR SHARPLY FOCUSED PITCH ON THIS SUBJECT. HOWEVER, AS PRE-DICTED REF A, HE SRESSED SEVERAL TIMES THE TIME OF THAI

MILITARY SELF-SUFFICIENCY. FOR EXAMPLE, HE MENTIONED THAT THAILAND SHOULD HAVE A CAPABILITY TO MANUFACTURE SUCH WEAPONS AS 105MM HOWITZERS, 81MM MORTARS AND RIFLES. HE SPOKE CRITICALLY OF THE FACT THAT, DESPITE MANY YEARS US ASSISTANCE, THAT CAPABILITY HAD NOT BEEN DEVELOPED.

HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE THAI NEED TO REORGANIZE AND STREAMLINE THEIR ARMED FORCES, CHANGING EMPHASIS FROM CONVENTIONAL TO SMALL UNIT COUNTERINSURGENCY TACTICS. THE ACTING SECRETARY ASSURED HIM US WANTS TO CONTINUE GIVING HIGH PRIORITY TO MAP AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR THAILAND, BUT REMINDED HIM OF THE CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS PROBLEM AND OF THE HEAVY DRAIN ON AVAILABLE RESOURCES CREATED BY ESSENTIAL CAMBODIAN REQUIREMENTS.

5. NARCOTICS: (KMT, IBMND, ETC.)

(A) IBMND, KMT: AMBASSADOR PORTER RAISED THIS QUESTION EXPRESSING OUR CONCERN OVER IBMND NARCOTICS INVOLVEMENT AND OUR WISH THAT THESE ELEMENTS COULD BE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN. HE COMMENTED THAT APART FROM NARCOTICS, THEY SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE AND COULD BE AN IRRITANT IN RTG/PRC RELATIONS. HE SAID WE HAD EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN WITH GRC AND INTENDED TO TAKE IT UP WITH THEM AGAIN. CHATCHAI (WHO APPEARED TO LUMP THE CIF AND IBMND TOGETHER) SHOWED UNDERSTANDING BASED UPON HIS OWN SECRET

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EXPERIENCE IN 1954 WHEN HE HEADED THE THAI DELEGATION THAT ARRANGED THE INITIAL REPATRIATION TO TAIWAN. HE SAID HE AGREED THEY WERE HARMFUL AND SHOULD BE REMOVED.

(B) BURMA: CHATCHAI NOTED THAT "KMT" WERE ALSO A PROBLEM IN THAI RELATIONS WITH BURMA BECAUSE OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE ETHNIC MINORITIES. HE SAID HE HAD HEARD THEY WERE SUPPORTED BY THE US. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF TWO BRITISH TV PEOPLE, COWELL AND MENGES, WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISREPRESENTED AS AMERICANS. CHATCHAI ALSO MENTIONED ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL REPORTED BY THE BURMESE WHO, FROM DESCRIPTION, APPEARED TO BE AHMAD KAMAL. AMBASSADOR PORTER ASSURED HIM THERE WAS NO US SUPPORT FOR KMT'S OR BURMESE DISSIDENTS. CHATCHAI EXPRESSED APPRECIATION INDICATING THAT HE HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN SURE OF US POSITION. HE ALSO VOICED APPRECIATION FOR OUR AGREEING TO TAKE U NU AND ADDED "PLEASE KEEP HIM". HE SAID THAI RELATIONS WITH BURMA HAVE IMPROVED AND THAT IT IS THAI POLICY TO HELP AND SUPPORT THE GUB AS THE BEST MEANS OF ASSURING BURMESE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND NEUTRALITY. HE INDICATED THAT HE, CHATCHAI, HAD BEEN THE PRIME MOVER IN SHIFTING RTG'S BURMA POLICY.

(C) NARCOTICS: CHATCHAI HIMSELF RAISED THE BROAD SUBJECT OF NARCOTICS IN THAILAND. HE COMMENTED ON THE

DIFFICULTY OF ELIMINATING OPIUM CULTIVATION AND THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE CROPS IN ORDER TO AVOID DRIVING THE CULTIVATORS INTO ARMED OPPOSITION. IN INDIRECT REFERENCE TO US ASSISTANCE, HE COMMENTED THAT THE COSTS TO THAILAND FOR ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAMS WERE 20 OR 30 TIMES GREATER THAN THE US INPUT.

6. US BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT: DURING CONVERSATION WITH ACTING SECRETARY AT LUNCHEON, CHATCHAI RAISED IN PASSING, BUT DELIBERATELY, THE SUBJECT OF US INVESTMENT IN THAILAND. HE URGED RECOGNITION OF ITS IMPORTANCE, BOTH FOR THAILAND AND AMERICAN BUSINESS MENTIONING THAT BUSINESSMEN CONSIDER THAILAND TO BE AN IMPORTANT REGIONAL CENTER. IF THE US IS NOT HEAVILY INVOLVED THERE, CHINA, JAPAN AND EVEN THE SOVIET UNION WILL COME IN. THE ACTING SECRETARY AGREED ON THE IMPORTANCE AND URGED THAT INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES BE DEVELOPED.

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7. RELATIONS WITH PRC AND SOVIET UNION: CHATCHAI INDICATED THAT THE THAI EXPECT RELATIONS WITH PRC TO ADVANCE GRADUALLY ALONG THE PRESENT COURSE. MR. PHAEN TOLD EA/TB DIRECTOR THAT CHATCHAI DID NOT PLAN A VISIT TO THE PRC, AS REPORTED IN THE THAI PRESS, BUT CHATCHAI'S CONVERSATIONS WITH STATE OFFICIALS DID NOT TOUCH EXTENSIVELY ON THIS GENERAL SUBJECT. AS FOR THE SOVIETS, HE URGED THAT WE GIVE GREATER ATTENTION TO WHAT THEY ARE DOING TO THAILAND AND EXPRESSED SPECIFIC CONCERN ABOUT THEIR INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS. HE CITED THE EXAMPLE OF THE TWO RUSSIAN MEDICAL TECHNICIANS CAPTURED IN BURMA, WHOM HE GUESSED WERE NKVD AGENTS.

8. KRA CANAL: EA/TB DIRECTOR ASKED CHATCHAI'S VIEWS ON THE CANAL PROPOSAL. HE RESPONDED IN A DEROGATORY FASHION SAYING THIS WAS AN IDEA "SOME PEOPLE" HAD, BUT INDICATING THAT HE DOUBTED ITS ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY. HE SAID THE JAPANESE WOULD BE THE MAIN BENEFICIARIES BECAUSE OF THEIR DEPENDENCE UPON MIDDLE EAST OIL. HOWEVER, IF JAPAN SHOULD BE ABLE TO SATISFY A LARGE PROPORTION OF ITS POL REQUIREMENTS FROM SIBERIA AND CHINA IN THE DECADES AHEAD, A KRA CANAL WOULD LOSE MUCH OF ITS ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION. HE ALSO MENTIONED THE SAFETY PROBLEMS FOR NATIONS

IN THE AREA IF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES WERE EMPLOYED. EA/TB DIRECTOR REMINDED HIM OF FACT THAT USG HAD BEEN FORCED RELUCTANTLY TO DECLINE REQUEST FOR CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO REVIEW FEASIBILITY STUDY BECAUSE OF OUR DESIRE TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF USG INVOLVEMENT. ALSO REMINDED HIM OF OUR POSITION AS CONVEYED TO PRAPHAT THAT LIMITED TEST BAN TREATY WOULD PRECLUDE NUCLEAR EXCAVATION.

9. IN SUMMARY. CHATCHAI DID NOT APPEAR IN HIS WASHINGTON CONVERSATIONS WITH STATE OFFICIALS TO HAVE BROUGHT ANY

CLEARLY DEFINED MESSAGES THAT HE WANTED TO GET ACROSS OR TO
BE SEEKING DEFINITE ANSWERS TO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. HE
APPEARED MAINLY TO WIS

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